It’s better to burn out, than it is to rust.—Neil Young

Pay me now,,,, Or pay me later.-----Fram Filters

The inference, of course, is that a small investment now will eliminate a large cost in the future. We all know the price of corrosion. Anyone who owns a boat, motorcycle, riding lawn mower, farm tractor, beater pick-up knows what rust does to them.

My dad, who lives in New York, Binghamton, just a bit north of here, owns a 1990 Oldsmobile Cutlas. This thing has only 58,000 miles on it. It was my mom’s car and was only driven on “special” occasions. Weddings, funerals, vacations, “official” visits. You know, the original, “owned by a little old lady” car. Well, it has been driven even less now, dad’s having some problems and the car sits a little more. I was up there about two months ago, and took the car and my dad out for a spin. Filled the gas tank for him and ran some errands. This is when the troubles started. I knew this shocks and struts were shot from the “land yacht” feel on the road. However, it was once we parked that the real problems came to view. Gas—at $3.00 a gal. --- was “gushing” out of the tank. I looked under the car, but did not need to. I KNEW the bottom of the car was rusted. Short drives, in the snow and salt. Parked for days at a time, in a non-heated garage.

Let’s see if I can think of some more ways to make it rust faster. Okay. That’s my starting story. What I want to talk to you about today is in particular, Corrosion Mapping, and in general, corrosion awareness. We here, are aware of corrosion. We are also aware of a concept. A dangerous, insidious, stealthy, contagious concept. The old,”Out of sight. ---Out of mind.” Concept. Changing this approach is critical to the winning of our battle with corrosion. We must take corrosion OFF the “back burner” and place it “Dead center forward”.

Let’s see. You’ve got aircrews working on two aircraft. One group is doing a flight control rigging. The other is working

corrosion... The “whoopee” goes off. Which crew do you think will be sent flying? And why is that? Right. “Can it fly?” That becomes the determining factor. Yes: no corrosion work. No: Do what you can, BUT DO NOT DOWN THE AIRCRAFT.

I start to see that “Pay me now, or pay me later” coming into play.

So, what about this “Mapping” stuff?

How many here have children? Young ones. Say, seven or less. Have you had the joy of the “family trip” yet? I mean a road trip and not in today’s “land cruisers” with DVD’s game boys, individual head sets, etc. Just a CAR. Okay, at least it has air conditioning.

You with me? “Are we there yet?” You’ve heard that, right?

Well corrosion mapping is a TOOL. Its use is to get us to our destination in the most efficient manner possible. Mapping tells us: Where we were, where we are, and most importantly, where we are going. Are we there yet?

By where we are going, I mean “Are we winning?” Remember, this is a battle. By implementing mapping, we can determine the best “route” to our destination.

That destination being the elimination, or at very least, the containment, of corrosion on our aircraft.

By mapping the incidents of corrosion, along with the severity of the corrosion, we can identify “target” areas. By target, of course, I mean areas of high corrosion impact. Once these areas are identified, we can then adapt our “attack strategies”.

Let’s try a “best case scenario”: One of our “pain in the butt” inspections requires the removal of several panels. One particular panel has a history of being difficult to remove and ultimately leads to additional repairs. Through mapping, and the record keeping of the “maps”, we have determined that only 3% of the inspections have revealed any corrosion or other defects. Now,

assuming that the only reason for the removal of the damaged panel was to facilitate a corrosion inspection, we can suggest a reduced incident of inspection. Adapting this way will hopefully decrease the number of "incurred damage" caused by panel removal. An additional benefit may well be the elimination of the desire to "pencil whip" the inspection. The obvious "Worst case" scenario.

"The last six times I did that inspection, I didn't find a thing. I spent two days repairing that damn panel though."

Alright. We know a few things. We know that some air stations have a worse problem than others. I'm not picking on anyone here, but Barbers Point, Hawaii is known for its corrosive-ness. IF that's a word.

We know that a helo, deployed on the back of a ship in the Med. Is going to need more corrosion repair than one deployed, say in Arizona.

So how will mapping help?

Where are the engineers? Will there be another earth-quake in California? When? You see? Without the absolutes that engineers use, you can't say there will be an earth quake. You and I KNOW there WILL be another. But the engineers deal in absolutes. Bless them. Sometimes. If you can't show me-prove to me-WHEN an earth-quake will happen, then how can you be POSITIVE an earthquake WILL happen?

Without ALL the information, in ALL the proper places, we do not get a correct picture.

Presently, our mapping program is limited in its ability to contain all the information we desire. We can input location, severity, type of corrosion and the man hours and corrective action required to facilitate repairs. Our end goal is to allow us to capture the aircraft history. I.E.: Present station—Hawaii; Deployment status / history—how often, where, length of cruise; major mishaps and/or repairs; wing tip damaged/replaced.

The more information we can assemble, the brighter the picture becomes. If we can detect a trend, one that allows us to become

Pro-active, rather than Re-active, we can win the battle. If we can see that before this aircraft enters the "glide path" on its way to overhaul, that there will be less corrosion in an area, we can adjust our work efforts to take advantage. Likewise if we can see problem areas developing BEFORE they become catastrophic, we can initiate increased monitoring of the areas. Pro-Active!

Gentlemen, and ladies, I want to finish with a request.

I want you to take a look back over your careers, and see if you're happy. No, I'm not kidding! I know, if it was fun we'd call it going to "fun" every day, not going to work.

But I really mean it. Do you believe in what it is you're doing? Do you feel that you are having a positive impact on your programs? Do you have a passion for your mission?

Please say yes. At least to some of the above. This, corrosion control / prevention is an extremely important portion of aircraft maintenance. It must be brought to the attention of the "Powers that be" that corrosion is not something that lies in wait. Corrosion is an active, destructive force that never sleeps. It never lets up. If left un-attended it will destroy anything it comes in contact with. Removal from the back burner must become a top priority. Front and center is where corrosion control belongs.

I challenge you all. Become advocates of Pro-active corrosion initiatives. Invest in Mapping processes and programs. Become passionate in your efforts. If we are to make our assets last longer, be safer and perform to capacity for extended periods, we must all become "committed" to our project. Simply being involved is not enough.

Do you all understand the distinction of committed as compared to involved?

The distinction can easily be explained by something as common as your breakfast. For breakfast today, I had a cup of coffee, toast, home fries and bacon and eggs. The difference of being committed to a project and involved with one was evident there on my plate. While the chicken was obviously involved with my breakfast, the pig was most completely committed.

Thanks for your attention.